

12/15/65

Ready to Block U.S. Project for Joint A-Force

By Anatole Shub

Washington Post Foreign Service

PARIS, Dec. 14—France today served notice on its North Atlantic Treaty partners that it was prepared to block the latest American project for West German nuclear participation.

Foreign Minister Maurice Couve de Murville told the semiannual meeting of the NATO Council here that France could not regard as permanent the special ten-nation Nuclear Committee set up at a Defense Ministers' conference without French participation on Nov. 27.

The special committee grew out of a proposal by U.S. Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara last spring. It aimed to resolve the inter-allied deadlock over projects for creating a joint nuclear force in which the Germans would participate. At last month's meeting of Defense Ministers, West Germany was given a seat on a nuclear planning subcommittee, one of three then established.

Recent Dissatisfaction

While France did not initially oppose the convening of last month's conference, or the participation in it of NATO Secretary General Manlio Brosio, French officials have since then indicated dissatisfaction with the manner in which the Committee assigned the Germans a nuclear role.

Couve de Murville today made French objections explicit. He said the special committee was a consultative body, empowered only to make proposals to the full NATO Council. He warned that many a "provisional" or "temporary" body had an ingrained tendency to become permanent—and this, he said, should not and could not be done without a mandate from the Council at its next meeting in the spring.

It was therefore essential for the special committee to submit a "final" report on its activities by that time. Then,

See NATO, A22, Col. 1

**NATO—
From AI**

France Balks at Bonn

he said, the full Council could decide on whether the special committee should be given a mandate to continue. Unanimous agreement is required, and French officials have privately indicated they will block efforts which permitted to Couve de Murville's demand that the special committee's report be considered "final." A 25-minute discussion ensued, which ended with Schroeder's suggestion that a small group of experts draughtsmen prepare a compromise formulation, for review by the Council Wednesday.

In view of the French election campaign, it is generally thought likely that the issue will not be met head-on Wednesday, but will be deferred for future decision.

U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk told the Council that he did not accept any link between non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the various arrangements being considered for sharing nuclear control in the West. Russia has declared repeatedly—most recently to British Foreign Secretary Michael Stewart in Moscow—that the only non-proliferation treaty in which she is interested is one which bars any further German "access" to nuclear weapons. Rusk today urged his colleagues not to give the Soviet Union a veto over NATO nuclear arrangements.

This was, in fact, a stronger formulation than that used by Schroeder, who merely posed two rhetorical questions: Whether a treaty was in fact the way to stop proliferation, and whether a treaty could be devised that did not erode prospects for further development of the alliance.

[In Bonn, West German Chancellor Erhard said that in his Washington talks with President Johnson this weekend he was more concerned with agreeing on some system of effective nuclear deterrence than with urging the adoption of any specific nuclear sharing project. "It is not to be expected that we will come home

A-Role in NATO

with a completed contract in our pockets," Reuters quoted him as saying at a press luncheon.]

Rusk Talks on Vietnam

Most of Rusk's report was devoted to Vietnam, where he said tens of thousands of North Vietnamese infiltrators, including several regular army regiments, were now operating. He reported the U.S. force level at present at 180,000 and said it was being augmented. He reviewed U.S. efforts to seek a negotiated settlement, from the Kennedy-Khrushchev meeting in Vienna in 1961 to the present day, but noted that the 1964 and 1962 Geneva accords on Indochina did not furnish an adequate basis for peace.

The United States, he said, was not interested in retaining bases or troops in Vietnam after peace was secured, and it was committed to elections in and reunification of the country. A cease-fire, he said, could precede a gathering at the negotiating table or be the first order of business at it.

In connection with widely publicized reports that the United States was considering significant escalation of the war, American officials expressed the view that if a nation—China was meant—had a doctrine of aggression and the capacity to exploit it, this had to be stopped at the beginning.

No Garrison Cuts Yet

The U.S. officials said that it was too early to estimate the size of new troop commitments in Vietnam. As for possible cutbacks in the U.S. garrison of 250,000 men in West Germany, the officials said that they do not anticipate any

considerable reduction at the present time. However, military analysts here believe some such reduction will probably be discussed in the near future.

It is expected that Britain's Healey will argue strongly Wednesday for a reduction of force levels in NATO.

[Healey also indicated that British Foreign Secretary Stewart's talks in Moscow this month had indicated that the Russians are "now ready for talks on a high level," though no agreements with the West are likely, United Press International reported.]